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Plot for comic-style storyboards
Character Development
“Pilot”

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CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

Pilot

Page 1

Panel 1-3: A white scorched desert. A large sand vessel heads towards us. It is shaped like an up-ended cicada shell.

Panel 4-6: Sand vessel from behind. It heads towards a large, low, cylindrical structure.

Panel 7: XCU of CORBEN WALLACE'S profile: his patrician nose juts out like a ship's rudder, and his heavy brow pushes down on his lead-shielded prosthetic eyes.

CORBEN: Prepare for docking at station 35.

Panel 8: XCU of MARCUS' finger pushing a button labelled “DOCK”.
SFX: FTSHHHH!

Panel 9: Ext of sand boat docking at a bay in the structure, back end first.

MARCUS: Docking complete.

(Panel 2: XCU of CORBEN'S mouth. “Ready the cargo”.

Panel : Long thin panel of crates from the shelf side. One crate has been taken down, revealing SAL stacking a loader. SAL is a thin, pale, Asian man. He has greasy hair, and a soiled shirt. He wears augmentation armour on his left arm, and thick brown workmen gloves.

Page 2

Panel 1: CORBEN and MARCUS meet in the elevator.

Panel 2: XCU CORBEN hands MARCUS a small grey crate.

CORBEN: Aziz will most certainly try and barter for more. There are two extra crates on board, in my hold. You're to bargain no more than one.

MARCUS: Clear, captain.

Panel 3: The elevator doors open and reveal the cargo bay. SAL can be seen below, putting a final crate on the loader.

CORBEN: Say nothing to Sal.

Panel 4: CORBEN and MARCUS descend into the cargo bay. SAL eyes the crate in MARCUS' hands.

SAL: Aah – a secret worth knowing, but not sharing.

Panel 5: CORBEN presses a button on the wall and the cargo doors begin to open
SFX: Whrrrrrrrrr....

CORBEN: We all have business to do here, gentlemen. It's all for the same cause.

Page 3

Panels 1-3: Shows three stages of the back of the sand boat rolling up to reveal the three men standing in the bay.

CORBEN: Marcus, you're to head directly for Aziz. Sal, you're to come with me.

SAL: with any luck, Aziz will recruit him as a trader, and we'll finally be rid of this outlander.

Panel 2: Market from the POV of the cargo bay: a sprawling underground maze littered with stalls. Every walkway is packed with other sand boaters: large men and women clad in leaden armour, bartering goods.

Panel 4: Silhouette of the sandboat bay with the door opened. MARCUS can clearly be seen walking ahead; CORBEN and SAL followed by the loader head down the ramp.

CORBEN: We rendezvous in 30 minutes.

Page 4

Panel 1: CORBEN walks through Market with SAL. All around them, traders hock their wares, offering bargain prices.

SAL: All this sneaking around reminds me of the good old days. Tholemo would be proud.

Panel 2: a TRADER shows them his wares.

TRADER: Two pounds of goat meat for this fine engine?

CORBEN: It's not worth the rind. Tholemo led us to this path, and we honour his memory by walking in the legacy he left behind.

Panel 2: MARCUS arrives at a small hut set apart from the rest of Market. There is a large guard sitting outside the entrance.

SAL: Yes, and leaving me out of the loop is true to form.

Panel 3: He stands as MARCUS approaches.

Panel 4: XCU of MARCUS' package.

Panel 5: XCU of the GUARD'S eyes widening.

Panel 6: CU of GUARD pushing back the curtain door.

Page 5

Panel 1: Hut interior. Panel is flanked by MARCUS on right (from behind). In the centre is a small round wooden table. A single spotlight shines down on it. All around just out of reach of the light are various piles of boxes, scrolls and consoles.

Panel 2: From the shadows in the back, a small man – face obscured by the shadows – speaks.

AZIZ: It was a dark day, Marcus Blair, when your lifeless corpse hailed helplessly down onto our caravan. Broken and bleeding, we could have left the desert to claim you... but it was a lean year. My wife, may the winds take her South, suggested we keep you in case one would be mad enough to trade for a man. Curse your saviour who was. Now – 16 years later, I meet you again, resurrected. A man reborn, and seeking information on a long-forgotten project that has earned me my livelihood. But for what purpose?

Panel 3: MARCUS approaches the table.

Panel 4: He looks at it.

Panel 5: He sits, cross-legged.

Page 6

Panel 1: AZIZ steps forward from the shadows. Only the bottom half of his face is now lit: his eyes are still masked by the shadow of his khaki head-scarf.

Panel 2: MARCUS places the crate on the table.

Panel 3: AZIZ smiles.

MARCUS: I wish to trade.

AZIZ: This is obvious. Few come to Market with other intent, Blair.

Panel 4: MARCUS opens the lid.

MARCUS: The purpose is not your concern. I have brought the price you asked for, at great cost to my commune.

AZIZ: A cost I assume has been kept secret, and must – even now – be a mystery to them?

Page 7

Panel 1: MARCUS and AZIZ sit across from each other. AZIZ on the left – a small, robed man on astool; MARCUS on the right – a giant, forced to sit cross-legged upon the ground, and hunched over.

MARCUS: We seek knowledge of the project known as “Character Development”. Specifically the function of the station we discovered in the sunken plateau. Do you have it?

AZIZ: I do. Where is the rest of the fungus?

MARCUS: Show me the drives, and I shall retrieve the rest.

Panel 2: CU of AZIZ. He is chuckling.

AZIZ: My, they have taught you well! I am impressed, my son. Why I did not keep you as one of my own, is a mystery that eludes even my cunning mind. Very well.

Panel 3: XCU of AZIZ clicking his fingers. Behind his hand, a small man-servant approaches with a console.

Panel 4: The console on the table. MARCUS taps the keyboard with a thick finger.

AZIZ: As you requested: an historical account of the project, what it was for, why it was sabotaged, and why it was buried.

MARCUS: And how to stop it?

Panel 4: AZIZ slams the console shut. He is scowling.

AZIZ: The truth comes out. I suspected as much.

MARCUS: It must be done.

AZIZ: am quite aware of your motives, Blair, but let me assure you, the heartbreak you felt for one woman's death amounts to nothing to the lives you will ruin by succeeding in this.

Panel 5: CU MARCUS is shocked.

Panel 6: two shot. AZIZ hands back the console to his man-servant. The man servant is handing him a second one.

AZIZ: Yes, we know about you, Blair. You should not be surprised. You should be flattered I study my customers like I would any business venture.

MARCUS: I have two more crates aboard the sand boat. You can take it all for that console there. It's more than what the information is worth.

AZIZ: Now you have shown your hand, and this, I am afraid, will cost you more than what you came to bargain with. I cannot give you this information, Blair, and you must understand why.

Page 8

Panel 1: A sweeping panorama of the complex maze that is Market.

AZIZ: It is the shifting desert that makes us able to trade. Weigh the pain in your heart against the lives of many.

Panel 2: CU of MARCUS.

MARCUS: I came to trade the fungus for information.

Panel 3: AZIZ smiles. He opens the second console.

AZIZ: and information I have.

Panel 4: XCU of console. a picture of a dark haired girl lying in a hospital bed.

Panel 5: AZIZ smiles.

MARCUS: You found her.

Page 9

Panel 1: CORBEN is searching for goods. He comes across a small, thin blonde woman.

SAL: Alas, gone are the days when an honest man could haggle without having to confront his misdeeds.

MINAULD: Still haven't learnt how to keep your pet on a leash, Corben?

CORBEN: He's but digging his own grave, unaware that when he becomes useless I but have to blow and he'll fall in. I see you've come of age...

Panel 2: CORBEN spies a group of men trading nearby.

CORBEN: ...and have joined the Young crew. Sparsely armoured...

MINAULD: Unlike the luddites in Stanton, Corben, we at Young use our brains.

CORBEN: So where's your craft?

Panel 3: CU MINAULD smiling.

Panel 4: MINAULD walks away. Some of the Young crew scowl at CORBEN.

MINAULD: Good to see you too, dad. Give my love to the prince of the family

Page 10

Panel 1: MARCUS slams AZIZ onto the table.

MARCUS: You try too hard to distract me from my cause. I have brought you your payment. I am taking your information. A done deal. As a bonus, I let you live.

AZIZ: You forget who you're threatening, Marcus.

Panel 2: MARCUS pours the fungus all over AZIZ.

Panel 3: MARCUS snatches the console from the man-servant, but the man-servant has a tenacious grip.

Panel 4: AZIZ calls his guards.

Panel 5: The guard from outside enters the front flap.

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Panel 1: MARCUS charges forward wielding the man-servant.

Panel 2: Man-servant slams into the guard's face.

Panel 3: MARCUS pushes both aside.

Panel 4: SAL whips around when he hears a noise off.

SFX: CRASH!

SAL: We have the goods, yes?

Panel 5: CORBEN from behind, his head half-turned to look back.

Panel 6: MARCUS charges up the maze crashing through several stores towards CORBEN and SAL.

Panel 7: SAL and CORBEN look shocked.

CORBEN: Secure the loaders and program them to rendezvous with the boat.

SAL: Already done, Captain.

Page 12

Panel 1: AZIZ bursts from his tent.

AZIZ: Issue a lockdown! No South-lander escapes until Blair is dead!

Panel 2: Several traders turn to face MARCUS. They have armed themselves with various miscellany.

Panel 3: MARCUS crashes through their ranks like a well-aimed bowling ball.

Panel 4: A large trader pulls out some fire-arms.

Panel 5: CORBEN turns and sees him.

PANEL 6: MARCUS in the gun sights.

PANEL 7: CORBEN lifts the trader over his head.

Panel 8: CORBEN throws the trader.

CORBEN: I trust the trade went well?

Panel 9: MARCUS slams the small man away with a right hook.

MARCUS: He was happy to accept just the one crate.

Page 13:

Panel 1: CORBEN and MARCUS run for the sand boat. It's cargo door is opening.

Panel 2: Long perspective shot – many sand boats are being locked down

SFX: Choonk! Choonk! Choonk! (all getting closer to the stanton one)

MARCUS: I hope Sal has the good mind to...

Panel 3: The sandboat roars to life.

Panel 4: MARCUS and CORBEN jump aboard, but AZIZ has grabbed a hold of MARCUS. He aims a weapon at his head.

AZIZ: I beg you, Marcus, do this, and you ruin us all.

Panel 5: MARCUS look of concentration.

Panel 6: AZIZ fires...

Panel 7: the console leaves MARCUS' hands and falls out of sight off the edge of the cargo floor.

Pabe 14:

Panel 1: A small trader runs away with the console.

Panel 2: A shot is fired from above, and the trader drops.

Panel 3: CORBEN looks up and sees MINAULD hanging from a ladder in the ceiling of the cave.

Panel 4: MARCUS kicks AZIZ away and leaps down to grab the console.

Panel 5: MARCUS leaps aboard as the cargo door closes.

Panel 6: SAL in the cockpit pushes the throttle forward.

Panel 7: The sandboat detaches and light pours into Market blinding all who are close enough to the dock.

Panel 8: MARCUS hands the console to CORBEN.

CORBEN: Good work, Pilot. Get to your station before Sal burns any blacker.

Page 15:

Panel 1: CORBEN enters his post with the console.

Panel 2: MARCUS relieves SAL.

SAL: Just keeping your throne toasty.

Panel 3: CORBEN opens the console...

Panel 4: XCU of console: A picture of a dark-haired girl stares back. The information reads: Sarah Navara: rescued from the Vincent thermal mines. Age: 14. Irreparable damage to legs, pelvis, and right arm. Internal damage should have been fatal. Interned into the Agent Black program on consent of mother, Fietta.

Panel 5: Exterior desert. The sand boat rolls through the desolate plains. Overhead, a dirrigible floats high in the sky.

CORBEN: Marcus... who is Sarah Navara?

END.